

PDF hosted at the Radboud Repository of the Radboud University Nijmegen

The following full text is a publisher's version.

For additional information about this publication click this link.

<http://hdl.handle.net/2066/182125>

Please be advised that this information was generated on 2018-04-11 and may be subject to change.

From Rebel to Quasi-State: Governance, Diplomacy and Legitimacy in the Midst of Afghanistan's Wars (1979–2001)

Romain Malejacq

To cite this article: Romain Malejacq (2017) From Rebel to Quasi-State: Governance, Diplomacy and Legitimacy in the Midst of Afghanistan's Wars (1979–2001), *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 28:4-5, 867-886, DOI: [10.1080/09592318.2017.1322332](https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2017.1322332)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2017.1322332>



© 2017 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 26 Jul 2017.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 618



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



From Rebel to Quasi-State: Governance, Diplomacy and Legitimacy in the Midst of Afghanistan's Wars (1979–2001)

Romain Malejacq

Centre for International Conflict - Analysis & Management (CICAM), Institute for Management Research, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

ABSTRACT

How do warlords build their legitimacy and eventually exert authority? The case of Afghan leader Ahmad Shah Massoud demonstrates that warlords do not only build legitimacy through the internal provision of goods and services to the population under their control, but also build their legitimacy by projecting authority externally, through the development of their own form of diplomacy. In this article, I show that warlords develop complex and complementary legitimisation strategies that extend beyond their territorial realms to include consequential relationships with foreign actors.

ARTICLE HISTORY Received 28 October 2016; Accepted 2 April 2017

KEYWORDS Afghanistan; warlords; rebel governance; rebel diplomacy; quasi-states; Ahmad Shah Massoud; Soviet–Afghan war

Academics and journalists alike have long singularised warlords for their self-service nature. In this view, warlords are 'driven overwhelmingly by personal power, glory and monetary gain',¹ the *raison d'être* of warlordism.² It is widely assumed that warlords do not use resources for the purpose of building or consolidating a distinct political community, that they do not *govern*. Warlords are not only considered illegitimate on the domestic political scene, they are also viewed as irrelevant on the international one.³ Yet, these actors cannot be reduced to mere local bandits and criminals. In this article, I retrace the political trajectory of Afghan warlord Ahmad Shah Massoud to show, first, that warlords can provide crucial services in certain 'politico-security environments'⁴

CONTACT Romain Malejacq  r.malejacq@fm.ru.nl

© 2017 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

(governance) and, second, that they can operate in the international system, through the development of their own kind of diplomacy. I argue that warlords use their ability to both govern and conduct diplomacy as complementary legitimisation strategies that allow them to consolidate their political authority and eventually survive in challenging environments.

Warlords can be defined as *astute political entrepreneurs with a proven ability to organise violence and the faculty to both exert and transform authority across different realms (ideological, economic, military, social and political) and at different levels of political affairs (local, national and international)*. They rise in places like Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria, when they can be seen as restoring order and protecting the population against the violence and mayhem of failed and failing states, in which '[distrust has become] more salient and consequential'⁵ and people tend to rely primarily on family and kin, ethnic, tribal or otherwise. It is in these situations, when the state no longer holds the monopoly of legitimate physical violence and is not able to provide those crucial services, or when 'its reputation as a defender of its population'⁶ has been damaged, that warlords strive and survive.

Warlords do not only provide security, protection and trust. Their authority is not limited to the military sphere, for 'functional differentiations between politics, economics, and the military are virtually non-existent'⁷ in failed and failing states. Warlords provide 'alternative forms of governance',⁸ not necessarily conceived as a normative concept associated with 'good' and 'democratic' governance, but rather as the act of governing, the way power is being exercised. Governance is 'a mix of all kinds of governing efforts by all manner of social-political actors, public as well as private; occurring between them at different levels, in different governance modes and orders'.⁹ Not only do warlords at times provide public services, but they also have a proven track record of providing governance, which in turn contributes to the legitimisation of their authority. The social capital that these actors use to construct and legitimise their authority is based upon their charisma and military strength and operationalised through the provision of services and other benefits to people under their control. This is governance, but not governance as most states (particularly contemporary states) conceive it to be.

Warlords also develop complex survival and legitimisation strategies beyond their territorial realms to include consequential (and largely under-researched) interactions with the state and international actors. They conduct their own kind of *warlord diplomacy*, a distinctive form of diplomacy that exploits personal networks as much as it does formal ties and is conducted to enhance personal authority. This suggests that warlord diplomacy is not only a 'wartime tactic'¹⁰ or a way to acquire political capital within the international system¹¹ but also a legitimisation strategy aimed at strengthening one's personal authority internally. Schlichte and Schneckener argue that non-state armed actors must rely on compatible, even mutually reinforcing sources of legitimacy in order to gain and

maintain power.¹² In this article, I highlight ‘reinforcing feedback effects between domestic and international support’¹³ and argue that warlord diplomacy and ‘delivery-based legitimisation’¹⁴ are both compatible and complementary.

Methodologically, this article draws on over 200 semi-structured repeat interviews with prominent political actors (warlords, governors, ministers, diplomats, etc.) I conducted in Afghanistan from 2007 to 2015,¹⁵ as part of a larger comparative project.¹⁶ I asked my interviewees detailed and previously prepared open-ended questions about their life histories and then ‘pursued topics in depth as seemed appropriate and relevant.’¹⁷ While existing work on ‘rebel diplomacy’ focuses on armed groups and organisations,¹⁸ looking at individual leaders allows me to conduct careful process tracing of the ways these individuals – and Massoud in particular – evolved, transformed their power and developed successful survival strategies throughout their political careers, rebels one day, quasi-state leaders the next. This method further allows me to shift the focus from ‘rebel diplomacy’, ‘a rebel group’s conduct of foreign affairs during civil war for the purpose of advancing its military and political objectives’,¹⁹ to warlord diplomacy.

This work is divided into three sections. In the first section, I show that warlords like Massoud have the ability to operate in the international system and conduct their own form of diplomacy. The following sections follow a chronological order and focus on Ahmad Shah Massoud’s political trajectory and legitimisation strategies: first as a rebel, from the beginning of the Soviet–Afghan war in 1979 up to the fall of the communist regime in 1992, a period during which Massoud captured a (well-disposed) community to create a governance structure for the regions under his control while simultaneously projecting authority externally, through the development of his own foreign policy; then as the *de facto* leader of a quasi-state, from the fall of the communist regime up to his assassination on 9 September 2001, a period during which he enjoyed official recognition but lost control of most of his territory and during which the structure he had created earlier kept operating in parallel to the central state.

Warlords in the international system

Warlords may have ‘intruded upon international relations’, they remain excluded from systemic analyses.²⁰ In fact, ‘much of the academic analysis of warlordism has been developed at the comparative level and there is a paucity of research on warlordism at the level of the international system.’²¹ Those who conceive of warlords as actors of the international system are often limited in the way they see international links, as they privilege clandestine networks and do not consider how warlords try to influence the interests of international actors through diplomacy.²² Diplomacy is widely understood as ‘the strategic use of talk by states’²³ and by states only, hence depriving non-state armed actors of an important source of legitimisation. I argue that warlords have the ability to

conduct diplomacy and operate in the international system. They operate as alternative providers of governance; challenge the 'idea of the state'²⁴ and the existence of a social contract; and participate in shaping the process of state formation. Warlords therefore affect the process of state evolution and impact the interstate system.²⁵

If one conceives of states as 'makers and maintainers of boundaries' between different spheres (public/private, licit/illicit, legal/illegal, etc.) and territories, warlords can be considered 'creatures of the borderlands, growing up in regions where states and empires [are] both needy and inexperienced'.²⁶ States in turn have an interest in using the warlords' ability to *arbitrage*, that is, to 'take advantage of a price differential for political, economic, and cultural goods across terrains' as part of their own extraversion strategies.²⁷ While warlords are tied to their previous territorial control, their local authority gives them leverage among international actors. They take advantage of the complexity and heterogeneity of the international system, in which many competing actors with a variety of domestic and foreign policy agendas coexist and operate in a system where 'subjects are governed by a complex hodgepodge of foreign powers, international and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and domestic institutions'.²⁸

Though warlords 'interact with a constellation of national and international actors who rigidly structure the political environment',²⁹ they have the ability to operate and exert agency in that environment. 'Today's successful warlords', writes Mark Duffield, 'think globally but act locally'.³⁰ They are indeed able to 'act financially and politically in the international system without interference from the state in which [they are] based'³¹ while exerting authority at the local level. The warlords' political success (and legitimacy) in part rests on their ability to conduct their own foreign policy in ways that are otherwise reserved to sovereign states (through high-level diplomacy for example), as well as on their ability to conduct relations with (and infiltrate) their own state.

The warlords' faculty to reinvent themselves over time (from rebel to quasi-state leader, for example) partly depends on their position in the international system. They reject the internal hierarchy on which the existence of the Weberian state is based, conduct their own diplomacy (in which the concepts of *domestic* and *international* undergo a shift) and enter the international system *de facto*, while instrumentalising and subordinating elements of the state. At times, they accumulate resources and attempt to replace the state (as rebels). At other times, they rule in a mutual understanding with and along the central state. Warlords are actors who construct political authority on a different plane from the state. They exist on the same territory, but their realms of authority do not coincide entirely. In that sense, they may exercise a type of authority that is more flexible and durable than that of the state in the broader context of instability and violence.

The rebel leader (1979–1992)

Rebel governance

Ahmad Shah Massoud was born in 1952 in the Panjshir valley town of Jangalak, north of Kabul. His father was a Colonel in the Afghan Royal Army of King Zahir Shah. His grandfather, Yahya Khan, was a well-respected elder who had also worked for the king. The Massoud family held prestige and reputation and belonged to the highly respected Sarkarda tribe. Ahmad Shah's mother came from a prominent Panjshiri family of the Bakshi tribe. Like most children of military families, Ahmad Shah Massoud had to move regularly and live in different parts of the country, until his father was eventually assigned to a position in Kabul, where Massoud attended the Lycée Istiqlal and learned to speak French. In the early 70s, after he had failed getting in military school, he enrolled at the Kabul Polytechnic Institute for Engineering and Architecture, where he became increasingly involved with the student wing of Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiat-e Islami (Jamiat), a political party inspired from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood that aimed at establishing a state founded on the principles of Sharia law.³²

On 17 July 1973, supported by a fraction of the military and by leftist parties who had grown dissatisfied with the government's failure to improve the country's overall living standards, infrastructures and public services, Mohammed Daoud Khan, King Zahir Shah's cousin (and long-time political rival), staged a (bloodless) coup that ended the Afghan monarchy. The coup, in conjunction with the rise of Islamist and communist radicalism, marked the beginning of political instability in the country and directly triggered the beginning of Ahmad Shah Massoud's political career. After Daoud took power in 1973, his new government started to imprison radical Islamists. Most of them (including Massoud and Rabbani) fled to Pakistan, where the Pakistani authorities, eager to install a friendly regime in Kabul, started providing Massoud and others with secret military training. In 1975, Massoud joined with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, one of the founders of the Jamiat's student wing, in a revolt against Daoud's regime. His role was to start the uprising in the Panjshir, but he largely failed, due, he believed, to a lack of support from the local population. Massoud returned to exile in Pakistan; Hekmatyar split from the Jamiat to create his own party, the Hezb-e Islami, now considering Massoud, who had remained loyal to the Jamiat's leader Burhanuddin Rabbani, as his most dangerous enemy.³³

In April 1978, the pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) came to power in a coup against Daoud's regime, causing uncoordinated uprisings all across the country. In December 1979, this was followed by the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, in an attempt to support and ultimately steer the new communist regime, in a classic cold war fashion. Massoud, then in his mid-20s, returned to the Panjshir to stir up a revolt against the new communist government. Others undertook similar action, either on behalf of Rabbani and the Jamiat, like Massoud, or under a different political banner. In the meantime,

the leaders of all these different political parties remained in Peshawar, Pakistan, where they could gather support from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and, indirectly, the United States (US) – which, in the context of the cold war, started a covert action program to support the Afghan holy warriors (mujahideen) in their war against the Soviet Union. These political leaders would then redistribute the weapons and financial resources they received to their commanders based in different parts of Afghanistan, thus fostering the creation of a strong, but highly fragmented, resistance movement in the country.³⁴

Massoud showed up in the Panjshir with only a very limited number of men. Yet, this time, he did not arrive unannounced. The failure of 1975 had made him very well aware of the importance of local legitimacy. Learning from his mistakes, Massoud had carefully prepared his return, sending representatives to the Panjshir ahead of time to get support from mullahs and elders and hence be able to build on his existing social capital (his family's prestige and reputation), which was key to his personal legitimacy and later to his ability to provide governance while waging a war (hence relying on mutually reinforcing sources of legitimacy). According to one of his former commanders: 'If [Massoud] had not belonged to this family, Panjshiris would not have obeyed him'. Support from the tribes was 'key to his war'.³⁵

Despite his young age, Massoud's authority in the Panjshir quickly grew, in particular due to his charisma and military prowess.³⁶ Opposition in the valley was, for the most part, quickly overcome, although sometimes through violent means. To further affirm and legitimise his authority, Massoud engaged in considerable propaganda efforts, starting very early on with inscribing anti-Soviet slogans on rocks and publishing newspapers that were used by mullahs in their Friday prayers. This legitimisation strategy is not uncommon in civil wars. 'By portraying the enemy, be it the state or another armed group, as particularly brutal, inhuman and evil', write Schlichte and Schneckener, 'the armed group aims not only to create solidarity but also to present itself and its violent actions as necessary, appropriate and comparatively less destructive'.³⁷

In 1980, a dawat-e Jihad (invitation to holy war), a non-military governing body, was created alongside every military base under Massoud's control. These bodies were in charge of recruiting young mujahideen, engaging in propaganda efforts, printing newspapers, running radio channels and educating children and cadres to the necessity of Jihad against the Soviet Union, hence building a common symbolic repertoire to 'bring together the disparate agendas at the local level with the central cleavage'.³⁸ Classes for the educated elites were organised around disciplines such as international politics and Islamic ideology. Massoud, a fervent reader of Mao, Che Guevara and others, even taught a class on guerrilla warfare.³⁹

Although the valley was only inhabited by about eighty thousand people, it was of vital importance to the Soviet Union, for it neighboured their main and only reliable overland supply route to Kabul, the Salang highway (and tunnel)

passing through the Hindu Kush mountains. Once Massoud had established his authority in the valley, he and his men started raiding and looting Soviet convoys on the Salang highway, using hit-and-run tactics before quickly disappearing in the adjacent mountains. The Soviet Union reacted to Massoud's attacks by launching six consecutive assaults on the Panjshir valley between 1980 and 1982, but could never defeat Massoud, although he only commanded over roughly one thousand fighters at the time of the first assault. Thanks to Massoud's intelligence networks in the Afghan Army, his forces were able to disappear and hide in the mountains before aerial bombings began, to later suddenly reappear and surprise Soviet tanks entering the Panjshir. By targeting the first and last tanks going through the narrow valley, Massoud's forces were able to stop entire columns, forcing the Soviets to abandon their tanks to the enemy.⁴⁰

Over the years, Massoud also became increasingly autonomous from Rabbani and the rest of the Jamiat leadership based in Peshawar. In 1983, a blockade organised by the Hezb-e Islami caused a critical food shortage in the Panjshir. Massoud reacted by concluding a temporary truce with the Soviet Union, first reaching out to Afghan Government officials and military personnel, then discussing directly with Soviet KGB officers without consulting with the Jamiat leadership. The agreement, formally endorsed by the General Secretary of the Communist Party in Moscow, stipulated that all Soviet troops had to leave the Panjshir (except for one battalion located at the southern entrance of the valley). Until then, Massoud had not been able to exert his own high-level diplomacy. Although the truce certainly worsened his relationships with the party and the Pakistani authorities, he felt it 'would raise his stature by placing him on an equal footing with a superpower'.⁴¹ It established Massoud, the 'Lion of the Panjshir', as a major player able to conduct his own diplomacy with the Soviet Union and hence affirm his independence vis-à-vis the Jamiat leadership.

The truce further allowed Massoud to assert his autonomy from Rabbani and the party by extending his sphere of influence (not without encountering local resistance). Liberated from Soviet pressure, Massoud moved north and created a proto-state structure named the Shurah-e Nazar (Supervisory Council) to govern most of north-eastern Afghanistan. The move had mutually reinforcing objectives: defeat rival organisations (in particular the Hezb-e Islami) and hence further secure the Panjshir; bring law and order to an extended fiefdom; and further establish his autonomy vis-à-vis the Jamiat. Massoud formed a civilian shadow government separated from the military one, at a time when the activities of most Afghan commanders were limited to classic guerrilla tactics with no governing capacities. Various committees were created within the Shurah-e Nazar to provide a number of services to the population: a taxation system, courts, military police, education, a bank, etc.⁴² Although these committees were not always fully functional, they provided the commencements of what could be dubbed *rebel governance*, that is, 'the production of government for

civilians during the protracted violence and high levels of coercion produced by civil war.⁴³

Rebel diplomacy

In the same period, Massoud also developed his own warlord diplomacy, then a form of rebel diplomacy aimed at building his personal authority, at first interacting mostly with foreign journalists (a critical component of the international arena,⁴⁴ especially for rebels with limited outside access). As Bridget Coggins perceptively notes: 'Using media outlets and personal contacts to spread the insurgents' ideology, propagandise, and inform may win the favour or neutrality of key constituencies.'⁴⁵ Western journalists started to provide detailed reports of Massoud's war in the Panjshir as early as 1981. Foreigners established close relationships with Massoud, spreading his message of resistance to the Soviets throughout Europe, contributing to his fame and attracting more media attention, as part of his own 'marketing' strategy (hence increasing his personal legitimacy and eventually 'inventing an icon').⁴⁶ Journalists from around the world started to come to the Panjshir. If a British journalist wanted to come to the Panjshir, for example, he first had to contact Massoud's brother, Ahmad Wali, the Shurah-e Nazar representative in the United Kingdom (UK); Ahmad Wali would then contact someone in the Peshawar office that was created in parallel to the one of the Jamiat; and then that person would have to coordinate with someone in the Panjshir. Not only did Massoud have people in Peshawar in charge of organising their trip to the Panjshir, but he also had a person of trust to take care of them once in the valley. He even had a guesthouse built to make sure they would be properly hosted.⁴⁷

According to the former Shurah-e Nazar representative in Washington, 'Massoud didn't leave Afghanistan [from 1979 to 1990]. He reached people outside through intelligence, diplomatic channels, but mostly through journalists'.⁴⁸ For Massoud's former head of intelligence, it was 'a strategy to avoid [the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Pakistani secret service] and get international connections' free of interference from the party (which also contributed to building his domestic legitimacy vis-à-vis the population under his control).⁴⁹ All in all, Massoud was very well aware of the importance of good public relations (PR). He knew the role the media could play in shaping his image and portraying him as *the* main resistant leader to the Soviets in the West and how this could benefit him in the long run, both internally and externally.

Massoud's relations with NGO workers followed a similar pattern. They often took the same routes as journalists and were in contact with the same people. NGOs played an important role in the functioning of Massoud's complex administration. The Shurah-e Nazar in fact depended on them for most non-military matters: health, reconstruction, education, etc.⁵⁰ Massoud was able to harness NGOs and international organisations working in his fiefdom as part of a strategy

of asserting power through providing protection and taking credit for services that foreigners provided, an indirect 'delivery-based legitimisation' of sorts. Hence, the importance, for Massoud, of boosting his image abroad, claiming a monopoly over diplomatic channels and portraying himself not only as the main leader of the anti-Soviet resistance but also as a 'good' warlord, that is, a military figure that NGOs would be willing to support.

In parallel, Massoud developed international networks through his offices abroad, such as the ones in London and Peshawar previously mentioned. Massoud's ability to connect with foreign countries was still limited, as officially he remained a commander working under the Jamiat leadership. The party started to open offices around the world in the mid-1980s, with people lobbying in Washington, DC, New York, London or Paris to get financial and military support, with both Rabbani and Massoud sending their own people to make sure their personal interests would be represented. In addition to bringing journalists to the Panjshir, the Peshawar office was also in charge of setting up direct links to foreign services. It is, for example, thanks to this office that Massoud established a connection with Abdullah Azzam (one of the future founders of al-Qaeda) and in turn started receiving aid from the Arab world through Azzam's networks of supporters. Other offices had similar though less covert activities (meeting with journalists, state officials and Members of Parliament; publishing newspapers; etc.). The offices were also taking care of getting support from the Afghan Tajik diaspora, which was providing extra lobbying power as well as finding buyers for the gems of the Panjshir valley. These offices became increasingly important and Massoud soon started to staff them with people of trust: the Peshawar office was reinforced with some of his most trusted advisors in the midst of the war as the Soviets started attacking the Panjshir again; and Massoud sent his own brother to be his representative in London.⁵¹

However, in the absence of direct contacts with the ISI, Massoud remained highly dependent on the Jamiat's redistribution of resources for weapons and ammunition provided by the Pakistani intelligence. For a long time, the only external support he received was military training (both inside and outside Afghanistan) and material (radios, communication material, etc.) from France and the UK. The French, who also provided doctors, nurses and money for reconstruction, liked to portray Massoud as an Afghan liberator, probably in part because he went to Afghanistan's only French high school (and was therefore able to speak French). In fact, his bourgeois upbringing, urban youth and Western-style education certainly explain the relative ease with which Massoud interacted with Western countries in general and France in particular.⁵²

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had been suspicious of Massoud since he had signed a truce with the Soviet Union. In 1984 they started to provide him with cash through the Peshawar office up to, according to an American journalist, \$200,000 a month in 1989, with two additional payments of \$900,000 and \$500,000 made to one of his brothers between May 1989 and January

1990. Massoud eventually sent his representatives to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to meet with Prince Turki al-Faisal, the chief of Saudi intelligence and facilitate a rapprochement with the ISI. He himself took a trip to Peshawar in 1990 to meet with the ISI Director and the CIA Station Chief, a trip that led to increased shipments from the Pakistani intelligence service.⁵³

The quasi-state leader (1992–2001)

From rebel to quasi-state leader

On 14 April 1988, on the brink of collapse, the Soviet Union signed the Geneva agreement, by which it promised to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan between May 1988 and February 1989. Contrary to American expectations, the communist regime was able to remain firmly in place for another three years. Through his connections in the government and the army, Massoud was allegedly offered the defence minister position in the communist regime, as well as the leadership of an autonomous north-eastern region to be created. He turned both offers down. Unlike other warlords who pursued regionalist interests, Massoud always had a national project and a national ambition, aimed at capturing and centralising power, something that has always remained consistent in his external communication. For him more than for anyone else, the state had become the principal objective, providing international recognition, legitimacy and resources.⁵⁴

After Moscow's supplies to the Afghan communist regime got cut off with the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, Massoud started approaching the most powerful pro-government commanders of the North to plan the capture of Kabul and the ensuing power-sharing arrangements. Massoud was designated to become the future defence minister through the Peshawar accord, a power-sharing agreement signed by the main political leaders exiled in Pakistan on 24 April 1992, the day before he and his northern allies took control of the capital. Starting in 1992, Massoud and Rabbani (who would become President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan a few months later) therefore controlled the most important buildings in Kabul. As such they were recognised by the international community as the official government of Afghanistan, although they could not meet the demands of empirical statehood, hence becoming the representatives of a *quasi-state*, a state that is recognised as such by the international community but does not have the capacities to exert *de facto* sovereignty.⁵⁵ Not only was the new government unable to control and exert effective power over the entire territory – after all no Afghan ruler has ever met this standard – but it could not even control the whole capital city, which was divided between armed factions and became the scene of violent combats. The end of the communist regime had resulted in a violent power struggle and changing alliances between the different armed groups, some that had participated in the highly fragmented anti-Soviet resistance (the Jamiat, the Hezb-e

Islami, etc.), others led by former militia commanders who had been fighting alongside the communist regime.⁵⁶

Yet, despite the government's weakness, by seizing Kabul and capturing state institutions (which was facilitated by the Panjshir's geographical proximity to the capital), Massoud had become the state (a quasi-state), a major shift from the previous period. Although Rabbani was officially the President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, *de facto* Massoud was exerting authority on behalf of the state, hence benefiting from international recognition. As an acute observer of Afghan politics once told me, the Rabbani–Massoud relationship was in some ways comparable to the one between King of France Louis the XIII and Cardinal Richelieu in the seventeenth century: Rabbani was the legitimate monarch (with the advantage of printing money and receiving hard currency) to whom Massoud was paying allegiance, but the latter, because of his charisma, military skills and local legitimacy, was in command.⁵⁷ At the time Massoud took Kabul, Rabbani had pressured him to end the Shurah-e Nazar, which had already become largely independent of the Jamiat during the Soviet–Afghan war. While Massoud accepted and announced the dissolution of the proto-state structure, he never took concrete actions to end it, maintaining his own separate structure as a way to build his personal authority, in parallel to both the state and the party. According to American reporter Steve Coll:

By 1994 the Panjshiris were seen by many Pashtuns in Kabul as a kind of battle-fighting mafia. United by a decade of continuous war under Massoud's charismatic leadership, the Panjshiris were close-knit, tough, secretive, and a government within the government.⁵⁸

Rabbani's government's exercise of power was further undermined with the creation, in 1994, of the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist militant movement that aimed at conquering power, progressively took control of most of the country (except the north-eastern corner) and eventually seized Kabul in 1996. While Massoud and Rabbani had gained international recognition by capturing the capital and toppling the government in 1992, the same rule did not apply to the Taliban. Only three countries recognised the Taliban as the official regime in Afghanistan: Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.⁵⁹ Rabbani's government remained the official representative of the Islamic State of Afghanistan throughout the war, even though it no longer controlled Kabul and had to move to the north-east of the country, still controlled by Massoud and his men, in 1996. Massoud reacted to this forced exile by creating and leading the Northern Alliance, a loose coalition of warlords and commanders who had fought against each other throughout the 1990s.⁶⁰

From then onwards, Tajikistan remained the Afghan government's only land contact to the outside and thus became of tremendous strategic value. Engaged in his own war against Islamist radicals and afraid that they would join the Taliban, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmanov (nowadays known as Emomali Rahmon) started supporting Massoud. The government of Afghanistan

was given access to Tajik airports as well as the permission to enter Tajik territory without visas, which provided Massoud with both a safe haven (where he could hold his diplomatic meetings safely) and a direct access road for Russia and Iran to deliver military supplies (see below).⁶¹

Quasi-state diplomacy

Since the beginning of the Soviet–Afghan war, Massoud had always recognised the value of good PR and foreign policy. Belonging to the officially recognised Government of Afghanistan gave him the means to develop a fully fledged diplomatic campaign and become a real ‘wartime diplomat’.⁶² His first step was to build a diplomatic corps, both by sending representatives abroad and by delegating diplomatic tasks to senior aides to get broader international support and rally the Afghan diaspora to the anti-Taliban resistance, under his leadership. Massoud continued to search for potential backers and dispatch some of his most trusted aides abroad, this time as official representatives of the Afghan Government. His representatives were asked to meet very specific people from whom Massoud could get support.⁶³ Ahmed Wali, for example, remembers meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto or the Aga Khan on his brother’s request.⁶⁴

Massoud had a profound understanding of international affairs, knew how to read his audience and adapted his discourse accordingly. With the emergence of the Taliban, and even more so after they took control of Kabul in 1996, he portrayed himself as the last rampart against Islamic radicalism and a defender of women’s emancipation, always depicting the Taliban as a threat to the Islamic world and the West.⁶⁵ The role of his most trusted lieutenants overseas therefore shifted with the geopolitical context, from explaining to foreigners the danger the Soviets represented to that of a radical group (the Taliban) associated with a terrorist organisation (al-Qaeda), while continuing their efforts to reach out to the Afghan diaspora. Dr Abdullah, Massoud’s former spokesman-turned minister of foreign affairs, recalls that after the Taliban took control of Kabul, the main offices abroad, in particular the UK and the US ones (staffed mostly by Massoud’s and Rabbani’s aides and ethnic Tajiks in exile), also started to work as branch offices of the ministry of foreign affairs.⁶⁶

Massoud was also sending his representatives to foreign countries. Dr Abdullah, attended conferences and multilateral events (Economic Organization Conference, United Nations Millennium Summit, etc.), spread Massoud’s message abroad (Iran, India, Uzbekistan, etc.), and dealt with the diplomatic missions. Massoud also started travelling abroad for important occasions. His efforts to create a competent diplomatic team were accompanied with his personal involvement in his foreign policy through extensive foreign travel, in contrast to his approach during the Soviet–Afghan war or while in Kabul. Although Massoud had previously built his aura around the fact that he had always

stayed in Afghanistan, he started to act as a state leader and take numerous trips abroad, including to Russia, Iran, Uzbekistan, India and France.

Like the other countries in the region, the Russian Government became concerned after the Taliban took Kabul and advanced north towards Mazar-e Sharif. Massoud, who had developed his Russian networks during the Soviet–Afghan war and through his later involvement in the Tajik peace process, travelled to Moscow in 1997 to open negotiations about arms supplies and airfield access. He later met with the Russian defence minister in Dushanbe, took another trip to Moscow to meet with President Putin in 2000 and eventually started buying weapons and ammunitions from the former occupying power he had spent a decade fighting against.⁶⁷

Massoud's relations with Teheran, cold at best, also changed dramatically as the Taliban took Mazar-e Sharif, attacked the Iranian consulate and killed everyone inside (including several dozens of diplomats and Sepah-e Pasdaran, Iran's Revolutionary Guards) in 1998. Massoud requested an urgent meeting with the Iranian authorities as they had gathered soldiers to the border with Afghanistan for retaliation against the Taliban. An Iranian Falcon was sent to Dushanbe to pick him up and brought him to Teheran to meet with the foreign affairs minister and his deputy. Massoud, now the uncontested leader of the Afghan resistance, persuaded the Iranians to go through him and to give him the monopoly over arms and ammunition distribution instead of attacking the Taliban directly. From there on, Massoud received regular deliveries of ammunition and logistical aid from Iran through Dushanbe, with the support of the Tajik Government.

A number of other countries offered minimal support. Massoud was in contact with the Uzbek authorities and travelled a couple of times to Tashkent, where he met with President Karimov and the head of the Uzbek secret service. Massoud also took a diplomatic trip to New Delhi in 2000, but India only offered limited political support and built a military hospital in the north-eastern city of Farghar, in the zone under his control.⁶⁸ France had been providing limited support, most notably paying for the Jamiat mission and the Afghan embassy in Paris and delivering computers and radio equipment, but nothing significant since the end of the Soviet–Afghan war.

In April 2001, Massoud travelled to Strasbourg, France, to speak in front of the European Parliament. A few months earlier, an invitation had been made to French politicians to visit Massoud in the Panjshir, as part of a PR operation. The invitation was then extended to a group of European Parliament members and a resolution condemning the Taliban regime adopted by the European Parliament shortly thereafter. Massoud was then invited to Strasbourg, where he met with a number of European officials, political groups and parliament members, to give a speech before the European Parliament. This speech, which was particularly well received, greatly boosted his international image and his legitimacy vis-à-vis the Afghan diaspora.⁶⁹

Yet, Massoud was fully aware that PR operations and a safe haven, though necessary to the survival of the government in exile, would not be sufficient to defeat the Taliban. He quickly understood the need for US support. In the 1980s and 1990s, Massoud's relationship with the CIA had been bumpy. The US agency had been very suspicious of him since he had refused their demand to close the Salang highway during the Soviet–Afghan war (for he also needed this major trade route to remain open) and sceptical of his potential role in the fight against al-Qaeda. Furthermore, with the end of the cold war, the American interest for Afghanistan faded and the CIA stopped supporting Massoud.⁷⁰ Contacts were re-established in September 1996, right before the Taliban capture of Kabul, as the CIA's Islamabad Station Chief Gary Schroen flew into the Afghan capital to discuss a Stinger missile recovery programme with Massoud.⁷¹ The meeting 'marked the rebirth of unilateral CIA engagement with Afghanistan after a four-year hiatus'.⁷² The contacts were maintained in the following years, as the CIA sent teams to the Panjshir to help Massoud and his men with logistical issues, as well as establish direct secure communication lines between him and the CIA headquarters to pass along information on Bin Laden and al-Qaeda.

State Department officials retained a negative bias towards the Panjshiri leader, whom they considered to be self-righteous. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the rest of the Clinton administration remained deeply sceptical of Massoud and his allies in the Northern Alliance. The US Ambassador to Pakistan believed that supplying arms to Massoud would only fuel the conflict along ethnic lines. Others were concerned about alleged drug-related activities undertaken by the Shurah-e Nazar. The situation changed with al-Qaeda's bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. A more nuanced policy towards Massoud emerged out of the State Department in the summer of 1999. Clinton declared a policy of strict neutrality in the Afghan Civil War, but stated that his administration would be willing to cooperate with Massoud on intelligence operations. At the same time, the US made it clear to Iran and Russia that they did not oppose their arms deliveries to Massoud. Massoud later tried to convince the new Bush administration to do more for the Afghan resistance. He wrote a letter to Vice President Cheney, dispatched Dr Abdullah to Washington and even hired a lobbyist there, but to no avail. State Department policy towards the Northern Alliance would only change after Massoud's death and the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon that followed two days later.⁷³

Conclusion

Massoud's successful political career can be attributed to a variety of factors. Above all, the 'Lion of the Panjshir' was a charismatic leader with 'a strong sense of survival [and] a special nose for guerrilla warfare and tactics'.⁷⁴ As a rebel, he used these to take advantage of the geography of the Panjshir and resist the Soviets, extending his local authority, protecting the population, providing

governance and contributing to the creation of his own 'brand'⁷⁵ internationally, in particular through the media. Foreign journalists 'fell in love with him', said his former representative in Washington, DC, so much so that *The Wall Street Journal* called him 'the Afghan who won the Cold War'.⁷⁶

In the long term, Massoud did not owe his political survival to his sole military achievements and branding. He also had unmatched diplomatic and inter-personal skills, which allowed him to negotiate with and turn former enemies into allies (both internally and externally), seize the central state, obtain international recognition and represent his military prowess and charismatic leadership capabilities to a variety of foreign governments. These governments were acting on their national interests and may have preferred cooperation with Massoud because he controlled strategic territory. Nonetheless, they became more eager to work with him as a consequence of his self-representation. Massoud was able to use the resources that these foreigners provided to him to assert his domestic authority. In fact, the international diplomacy of the warlord gave him the autonomy to rule as he saw fit. While further research on the relationship between non-state armed groups' internal and external sources of legitimacy (and legitimisation strategies) is required, the case of Ahmad Shah Massoud shows that, in certain circumstances, the ability to project authority internally (through governance) and the ability to conduct foreign relations are mutually reinforcing. The ability to behave like a state internally and that to do so externally are intrinsically linked.⁷⁷

On 9 September 2001, two days before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, two al-Qaeda agents disguised as journalists played Massoud's desire to promote his reputation in the Arab world to obtain an interview. During the audience they blew themselves up and killed the Panjshiri leader,⁷⁸ unintentionally participating in the creation of the Massoud 'myth' in Afghan politics.⁷⁹ One of Massoud's main strengths, his ability to communicate and reach out to the media, had become a source of vulnerability that his enemies were able to exploit in order to destabilise the anti-Taliban resistance, in anticipation of the forthcoming US-led intervention (thus foreshadowing the events of 9/11).

In the end, Massoud's assassins did not manage to completely disorganise the resistance, at least not sufficiently to prevent the Northern Alliance, assisted by overwhelming US firepower, from taking over Kabul. What it did achieve, however, was deprive the Northern Alliance, and Afghanistan in general, from a highly charismatic political leader. Given Massoud's inability to unite the different factions under his leadership in the aftermath of the Soviet-Afghan war, it is unlikely, however, that he would have been able to unite the different groups under his name in the post-Taliban Afghanistan.

Notes

1. Lezhnev, *Crafting Peace*, 2–3.
2. Robinson, "Twenty-First Century Warlords," 123.
3. Schlichte and Schneckener, "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy."
4. Lezhnev, *Crafting Peace*, 8.
5. Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 15.
6. Osman, *The Fall of Kunduz*, 4.
7. Schetter, Glassner, and Karokhail, "Beyond Warlordism," 139. According to Antonio Giustozzi and Noor Ullah, 'what characterizes warlords is that their leadership is exercised over the military class. In other words, their strength is their military legitimacy. This, together with their control over a territory, gives them in turn a political role, but without the benefits of political legitimacy', Giustozzi and Ullah, "Tribes' and Warlords," 2.
8. Jackson, "Warlords as Alternative Forms of Governance." On warlord governance in post-2001 Afghanistan, see Mukhopadhyay, *Warlords, Strongman Governors, and the State in Afghanistan*.
9. Kooiman, *Governing as Governance*, 3.
10. Coggins, "Rebel Diplomacy," 99. On rebel diplomacy as a 'tactical choice' rather than a 'weapon of the weak', see Huang, "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War," 91.
11. Huang, "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War."
12. Schlichte and Schneckener, "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy."
13. Huang, "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War," 120.
14. Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud*, 193–4.
15. Most of the information I convey in this article has been corroborated in these interviews. For anonymity purposes, here I only refer to interviews when using quotes or information that pertains to specific individuals, and only with the interviewees' authorisation.
16. See Malejacq, "Warlords and the Coalition in Afghanistan"; Malejacq, "Warlords, Intervention, and State Consolidation"; and Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay, "The 'Tribal Politics' of Field Research."
17. Wood, "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research," 375.
18. Coggins, "Rebel Diplomacy"; and Huang, "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War."
19. *Ibid.*, 90.
20. Chan, "The Warlord and Global Order," 165.
21. Rich, "The Emergence and Significance," 1.
22. See for example Duffield, "Post-Modern Conflict"; and Reno, *Warlord Politics*.
23. Coggins, "Rebel Diplomacy," 101.
24. On the 'idea of the state', see Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, 44–53.
25. According to Marcel Merle, 'any authority, body, group and even person likely to "play a part" in social life – the international scene in the case in point' – is an actor in the international system, see Merle, *Sociology of International Relations*, 253. According to Hedley Bull's definition of the international system, only actors 'having rights and duties in world law, conducting negotiations and perhaps able to command armed forces' qualify as 'actors in world politics'; see Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 246.
26. Ahram and King, "The Warlord as Arbitrageur," 170.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Fearon and Laitin, "Neotrusteeship," 7.
29. Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers*, 28.
30. Duffield, "Post-Modern Conflict," 81.

31. Jackson, "Warlords as Alternative Forms of Governance," 131.
32. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 107–14.
33. Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 84 and 104; Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 114, 120, and 290; and Barfield, *Afghanistan*, 213.
34. Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 101.
35. Email communication with former commander of Ahmad Shah Massoud, 9 August 2012.
36. On charismatic authority, see Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*.
37. Schlichte and Schneckener, "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy," 418.
38. Mampilly, "Performing the Nation-State," 85. On performances and symbolism, see also Terpstra and Ferks, "Governance Practices and Symbolism."
39. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 116; Morillon, *Le testament de Massoud*, 64; and Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud*, 282.
40. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 116–7.
41. *Ibid.*, 121.
42. Puig, "Le commandant Massoud"; Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 237; and Sinno, *Organizations at War*, 132.
43. Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly, "Introduction," 5.
44. Schlichte and Schneckener, "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy," 419.
45. Coggins, "Rebel Diplomacy," 110.
46. Clifford Bob originally uses the idea of 'inventing an icon' to describe the marketing strategy of Commandant Marcos and the Zapatistas in Mexico, see Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion*, 161.
47. Puig, *La pêche à la truite*, 507–28.
48. Interview with former representative of the Shurah-e Nazar in Washington, DC, Kabul, 2 February 2011.
49. Interview with former director of the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS), Kabul, 6 February 2011.
50. Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending*, 133.
51. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 345.
52. Morillon, *Le testament de Massoud*, 14.
53. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 219–20. According to Abdulkader Sinno, "[t]he Saudis also gave Massoud and Rabbani \$150 million in 1993–94," see Sinno, *Organizations at War*, 233.
54. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 186; Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending*, 235; and Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud*, 282 and 285.
55. Jackson, *Quasi-States*.
56. Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 247; Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 262–3; and Barfield, *Afghanistan*, 248–53.
57. Interview with Afghan researcher, Kabul, 13 March 2011. On the relationships between Massoud and Rabbani and the role of the latter, see also Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud*, 285.
58. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 286.
59. On the politics of international recognition, see Coggins, "Friends in High Places."
60. Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 270.
61. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 47, 345, and 464; and Giustozzi, *Empires of Mud*, 286.
62. Huang, "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War," 91.
63. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 345.
64. Interview with Ahmad Wali Massoud, Kabul, 13 February 2011.
65. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 465; and Torabi, "State-, nation- et peace-building," 21.

66. Interview with Dr Abdullah Abdullah, former minister of foreign affairs, Kabul, 7 February 2011.
67. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 345.
68. Philippe Morillon however seems to believe that India was not only providing political support but also weapons, see Morillon, *Le testament de Massoud*, 44. Coll mentions cash payments, see Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 519.
69. Morillon, *Le testament de Massoud*.
70. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 233; and Morillon, *Le testament de Massoud*, 44.
71. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 14.
72. *Ibid.*, 336.
73. *Ibid.*, 575.
74. Interview with Member of Parliament, Kabul, fall 2008.
75. On political actors as 'brands', see Médard, "Le système politique bordelais."
76. Interview with former representative of the Shurah-e Nazar in Washington, DC, Kabul, February 2, 2011.
77. Schlichte and Schneckener, "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy."
78. Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 574–84.
79. On political leaders as 'myths', see Médard, "Charles Njonjo."

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful for comments received at Utrecht University's 'Izmir Relocated' workshop and Leiden University's 'Conflict and the Resources of Legitimacy' workshop. The author would also like to thank Ilse Renkens and John Jacobs for invaluable research assistance as well as the editors of this special issue and *Small Wars & Insurgencies* anonymous reviewers for their extremely helpful comments and suggestions.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Funding

The fieldwork conducted for this article was made possible by support from the French Embassy in Afghanistan, the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale and the Fondation Pierre Leroux. The author also received support from the European Commission (Marie Curie Individual Fellowship, project 661644).

Bibliography

- Ahram, Ariel I., and Charles King. "The Warlord as Arbitrageur." *Theory and Society* 41, no. 2 (2012): 169–186. doi:[10.1007/s11186-011-9162-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-011-9162-4).
- Arjona, Ana, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly. "Introduction." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, 1–20. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Barfield, Thomas. *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Bob, Clifford. *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

- Bull, Hedley. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.
- Buzan, Barry. *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*. Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983.
- Chan, Stephen. "The Warlord and Global Order." In *Warlords in International Relations*, edited by Paul B. Rich, 164–172. London: MacMillan, 1999.
- Coggins, Bridget. "Friends in High Places: International Politics and the Emergence of States from Secessionism." *International Organization* 65, no. 3 (2011): 433–467. doi:[10.1017/S0020818311000105](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818311000105).
- Coggins, Bridget. "Rebel Diplomacy: Theorizing Violent Non-State Actors' Strategic Use of Talk." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana M. Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, 98–118. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Coll, Steve. *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. London: Penguin Books, 2004.
- Dorronsoro, Gilles. *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan, 1979 to the Present*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Duffield, Mark. "Post-modern Conflict: Warlords, Post-Adjustment States and Private Protection." *Civil Wars* 1, no. 1 (1998): 65–102. doi:[10.1080/13698249808402367](https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249808402367).
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States." *International Security* 28, no. 4 (2014): 5–43. doi:[10.1162/0162288041588296](https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288041588296).
- Giustozzi, Antonio. *Empires of Mud: Wars and Warlords in Afghanistan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Giustozzi, Antonio, and Noor Ullah. "'Tribes' and Warlords in Southern Afghanistan, 1980–2005." *Crisis States Working Paper* 7. London, 2006.
- Huang, Reyko. "Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War." *International Security* 40, no. 4 (2016): 89–126. doi:[10.1162/ISEC_a_00237](https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00237).
- Jackson, Paul. "Warlords as Alternative Forms of Governance." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–150. doi:[10.1080/09592310412331300716](https://doi.org/10.1080/09592310412331300716).
- Jackson, Robert H. *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Kooiman, Jan. *Governing as Governance*. London: Sage, 2003.
- Lehznév, Sasha. *Crafting Peace: Strategies to Deal with Warlords in Collapsing States*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005.
- Mampilly, Zachariah. "Performing the Nation-State: Rebel Governance and Symbolic Processes." In *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, edited by Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, 74–97. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Mampilly, Zachariah. *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011.
- Médard, Jean-François. "Charles Njonjo: portrait d'un 'Big Man' au Kenya." [Charles Njonjo: Portrait of a 'Big Man' in Kenya.] In *L'Etat contemporain en Afrique* [The Contemporary State in Africa], edited by Emmanuel Terray, 49–87. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987.
- Médard, Jean-François. "Le système politique bordelais (le 'système Chaban')." [Bordeaux's Political System (the 'Chaban System').] *Revue internationale de politique comparée* 13, no. 4 (2006): 657–679. doi:[10.3917/ripc.134.0657](https://doi.org/10.3917/ripc.134.0657).
- Merle, Marcel. *The Sociology of International Relations*. New York: Berg, 1987.
- Morillon, Philippe. *Le testament de Massoud* [Massoud's Testament]. Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 2004.
- Mukhopadhyay, Dipali. *Warlords, Strongman Governors, and the State in Afghanistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Osman, Borhan. *The Fall of Kunduz: What Does It Tell Us about the Strength of the Post-Omar Taliban?* Kabul: Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2015.

- Puig, Jean-José. *La pêche à la truite en Afghanistan* [Trout Fishing in Afghanistan]. Paris: Editions de La Martinière, 2005.
- Puig, Jean-José. "Le commandant Massoud." [Commander Massoud.] In *Stratégies de la guérilla: de la longue marche à nos jours* [Guerrilla Strategies: From the Long March up to this Day], edited by Gérard Chailland, 411–452. Paris: Payot & Rivages, 1994.
- Reno, William. *Warlord Politics and African States*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998.
- Rich, Paul B. "The Emergence and Significance of Warlordism in International Politics." In *Warlords in International Relations*, edited by Paul B. Rich, 1–16. London: MacMillan, 1999.
- Robinson, T. P. "Twenty-First Century Warlords: Diagnosis and Treatment?" *Defence Studies* 1, no. 1 (2001): 121–145. doi:10.1080/714000017.
- Rubin, Barnett R. *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*. 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Schetter, Conrad, Rainer Glassner, and Masood Karokhail. "Beyond Warlordism: The Loyal Security Architecture in Afghanistan." *Internationale Politik Und Gesellschaft* 2 (2007): 136–152.
- Schlichte, Klaus, and Ulrich Schneekener. "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy." *Civil Wars* 17, no. 4 (2015): 409–424. doi:10.1080/13698249.2015.1115573.
- Sinno, Abdulkader H. *Organizations at War: In Afghanistan and beyond*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Terpstra, Niels, and Georg Frerks. "Governance Practices and Symbolism: De Facto Sovereignty and Public Authority in 'Tigerland.'" *Modern Asian Studies*, forthcoming.
- Tilly, Charles. *Trust and Rule*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Torabi, Yama. "State-, nation- et peace-building comme processus de transactions: l'interaction des intervenants et des acteurs locaux sur le théâtre de l'intervention en Afghanistan, 2001-08." [State-, Nation- and Peace-Building as Transaction Processes: The Interaction between Intervenors and Local Actors on the Afghan Theater.] PhD diss., Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, 2009.
- Weber, Max. *Politics as a Vocation*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1965.
- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29, no. 3 (2006): 373–386. doi:10.1007/s11133-006-9027-8.